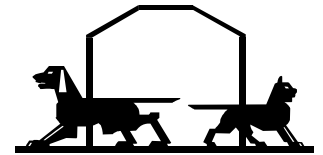




Maricopa County Animal Care & Control

Backyard Dangers



Protecting your animal companion from the dangers she could face outdoors begins in your own backyard. Could your dog or cat be facing enemy territory every time she steps outside? By taking the following simple, but important, precautions, you can ensure that your backyard is always a safe haven.

Monitor your dog when he is outside. By law, whenever your dog is outside, he must be confined or on a leash. The easiest way to keep your dog safe when outside is to be outside with him. Dogs are social animals. When left outside unattended, they will exhibit undesirable behavior such as barking or digging in an attempt to get attention. Plus, dogs that are alone for long periods of time are less likely to be well-socialized and in turn more likely to bite. If your yard is fenced, fill in gaps around your gates and hedges so your dog can't sneak out if you look away.

Allow your cat to explore the outdoors only while supervised and on a leash. Did you know that the average lifespan of an indoor cat is more than 10 years, while felines who reside outside survive for an average of only two years? Cats that roam outside are more likely to be exposed to infectious diseases than their indoors-only counterparts. Felines who go outside unattended are also at-risk for dog or wildlife attacks or could get hit by a car. If you still wish to take your cat outside make sure that she is up-to-date on vaccinations, that you are with her at all times and your cat is safely secured with a harness and a leash. A harness is necessary because cats can slip out of a collar.

Conduct a plant check. Many garden plants and trees can be harmful to animals if ingested. Some of these include oleander, holly, rhododendron, lily-of-the-valley, yew, clematis, ivy, columbine and hemlock. Some

For more information on animal care, behavior or AC&C programs contact (602) 506-PETS or visit pets.maricopa.gov



Backyard Dangers

Continued Page 2

species may be more, or less, toxic to dogs than cats, so it's a good idea to find out if a tree or flower is safe for your companion animal before you plant it. Also remember to keep flower bulbs out of reach of curious dogs and cats.

Make sure your garbage cans are secured with tamper-proof lids. It's a good idea to keep them in a cupboard or shed. Insecticides and rodenticides should be kept in a locked shed or garage; this goes for pool chemicals, paint, oil, gasoline, other dangerous chemicals and sharp tools as well. And remember to use common sense if you have just applied weed killer to your lawn or other toxic chemicals or fertilizer to the plants in your garden. Your dog or cat could be exposed to these potentially harmful substances simply by walking through an area where these products have been applied and then licking his paws.

Clean up any chemical spills immediately. Antifreeze, while essential to a car's cooling system, may be very dangerous to your pets if they are exposed to it. Consider switching to a propylene glycol-based antifreeze such as Prestone Low Tox, which provides an added margin of safety for companion animals and wildlife.

Prestone Low Tox is significantly less toxic than conventional ethylene glycol antifreeze, but remember - no antifreeze is absolutely safe. As with any household chemical, safe use and disposal is essential.

If you suspect your dog or cat has ingested poisonous plant material, antifreeze, insecticide or other dangerous chemicals, call your veterinarian immediately.

Maricopa Animal Care & Control Locations

**2323 S. 35th Avenue
Phoenix**

**2630 W. 8th Street
Mesa**

**Pet Adoption Center:
5231 N. 35th Avenue
Phoenix**
